

Leonard A. Johnson House  
8 Spruce Street  
Wallace  
Shoshone County  
Idaho

HABS No. ID-92

HABS

ID.

40-WAL,

13 -

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service, Western Region  
Department of the Interior  
San Francisco, California 94102

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
ARCHITECTURAL DATA FORM

HABS  
ID,  
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13-

STATE Idaho	COUNTY Shoshone	TOWN OR VICINITY City of Wallace
HISTORIC NAME OF STRUCTURE (INCLUDE SOURCE FOR NAME) Leonard A Johnson House		HABS NO. ID-92
SECONDARY OR COMMON NAMES OF STRUCTURE		
COMPLETE ADDRESS (DESCRIBE LOCATION FOR RURAL SITES) 8 Spruce St., Wallace, Idaho (Legal: 1st First Addn. Lot 7 Block 5)		
DATE OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE SOURCE) Circa 1925 (See supplement)	ARCHITECT(S) (INCLUDE SOURCE) Not known	
SIGNIFICANCE (ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL, INCLUDE ORIGINAL USE OF STRUCTURE) See supplement		
STYLE (IF APPROPRIATE)		
MATERIAL OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE STRUCTURAL SYSTEMS) See supplement		
SHAPE AND DIMENSIONS OF STRUCTURE (SKETCHED FLOOR PLANS ON SEPARATE PAGES ARE ACCEPTABLE) See supplement		
EXTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE See supplement		
INTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE (DESCRIBE FLOOR PLANS, IF NOT SKETCHED) See supplement		
MAJOR ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS WITH DATES New addition and complete remodeling 1982-1985 (See supplement)		
PRESENT CONDITION AND USE Condition: salvaged; Use: vacant		
OTHER INFORMATION AS APPROPRIATE house is scheduled to be torn down in 1988 to make way for a motel-restaurant-gift shop complex		
SOURCES OF INFORMATION (INCLUDING LISTING ON NATIONAL REGISTER, STATE REGISTERS, ETC.) Wallace Public Library, Harry Olson, Rich rd Magnuson, U.S. Census Bureau Natl. Register of Hist. Places, Safeco Title Co., Shoshone County Assessors Office, Barnard-Stockbridge Photo Collection, Sanborn Fire Maps.		
COMPILER, AFFILIATION Michael J. Green, Depot Productions, Wallace, Idaho		DATE May 1988

## LEONARD A JOHNSON HOUSE

### HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Leonard A. Johnson House at No. 8 Spruce St. is a contributing element of the Wallace Historic District and is located in a residential area containing homes constructed between 1910 and 1920.

The City of Wallace was first settled in 1884. It is located along the South Fork of the Coeur d'Alene River and at the mouth of three side creeks and gulches amid North Idaho's steep Panhandle. The founding of the town followed discovery of fabulous lead-silver deposits in the surrounding mountains. As mining activity quickly grew, so did the town. By 1887 the population was 500, which grew to 2,816 by 1920 (U.S. Census Bureau).

The town flourished from mining activities, and Wallace became known as the Silver Capital of the World because more silver has been extracted from the Coeur d'Alene Mining District, with Wallace as the hub, than any place on earth.

Much of the town was located on a cedar swamp, which was drained as growth occurred. The west end of town containing this house was drained and developed last. Northern Pacific Railway first owned this land in west Wallace. NP leased to private individuals this land, on which were built many homes. NP deeded the land to the homeowners in a period from 1920 to 1925. This addition to the town is known as the NP First Addition.

Dating exact construction of most of the houses is difficult because the first deeding of the property occurred after the homes were built. The Minnesota State Historical Society, Archives Manuscripts Division, which possesses defunct NP's records, could not locate copies of the original leases. Early fire maps and photographs show no homes built in that area prior to 1910. Most of the homes, then, were constructed from 1910-1920.

These dates were confirmed by Harry Olson, who has lived in west Wallace since 1922. He said in an interview most of the houses in west Wallace were already constructed when he moved there in 1922. He was 10 years old at the time.

Olson remembers nothing distinctive about west Wallace other than it being an ordinary residential part of town. Its residents were a mixture of business and working people, including miners, a druggist, county commissioner and even "bootleggers." The streets

were paved in the addition about 1920, Olson said. A flood in 1933 caused considerable damage to the streets and homes, he said.

As mining activity in the district began to decline in the 1970s and 1980s, so did the number of jobs and demand for homes. The 1988 population of Wallace was 1,460 (source: Association of Idaho Cities). The character of some homes changed as they went from owner-occupied to rentals. Some deteriorated from lack of care. (Some had been rentals for most of their existence.)

Because of the fast growth of the town in a short time span, Wallace contains a unique homogenous blend of architecture, which led to first a few buildings, then the downtown district, then the entire core of town listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Mining towns tend to have a transient population, and many homes have had numerous owners as a result.

This house was built circa 1925 by Leonard A. Johnson. Johnson and wife, Amanda, on Jan. 15, 1925, purchased the lot from A.H. Featherstone and George W. Walker. Featherstone, a judge, and Walker, a real estate businessman, had purchased the lot from NP on April 21, 1920. The first house on the lot was located behind (to the west) of the current house. On July 11, 1925, Johnson took out a mortgage for \$1,200 from Wallace Lodge No. 9, Scandinavian Fraternity of America, a fraternal organization. On March 4, 1926, Johnson took out another mortgage, this one for \$2,550 from the State Building Loan Association of Idaho. These presumably were to construct the current house. Johnson lived in the newer house for several years before moving about 20 miles west to Page, Idaho. Leonard was killed in 1936 in a mining accident at Page, and after probate court proceedings, Amanda received total ownership of the house. She returned to the house and lived there from 1936 to 1944. She died March 19, 1945, in Orofino, and the house was willed to her three children: Harry J. Magnuson, Clifford A. Magnuson and Vivian Olive Fleming. That deed transfer took place March 22, 1946. (Harry J. Magnuson is the father of H.F. Magnuson, a Wallace mining magnate, and Richard Magnuson, Shoshone County prosecuting attorney for many years and currently a district court judge.) The heirs deeded the house to Seth D. and Mildred Woodruff on June 24, 1949. Woodruffs owned the house until Aug. 11, 1964, when they deeded the house to Thomas D. and Barbara L. Watts. Mr. and Mrs. Watts deeded the house to Calvin and Linda Christmann on April 15, 1976 (recorded date). The Christmanns tore down the older house in back in 1976, which had been in disrepair, and wood from the house was used to construct a fence around the lot (source: Linda Christmann).

## EXTERIOR FEATURES

The house consists of an extensive addition that piggy-backs the older main part of the house, which has been extensively remodeled. The house was constructed circa 1925, and the addition was started in 1982 and finished in 1985. Both portions have a concrete foundation, and both are frame construction. The house is one and one-half story. A coal chute is located in the north foundation wall, which indicates the house at one time was heated by coal.

The original house was a single story with a gable roof with clipped gables and eave returns. These are still visible in the front portion of the house. The one and one-half story rear addition has a shed roof. All roofing is composition shingles. The eaves are boxed. Siding is all aluminum, blue in color. On the base house, the aluminum siding covers the original clapboard siding, painted white.

The windows are all sliding aluminum with the exception of the basement windows set in the concrete. One is sliding aluminum and two others are wood frame. The rear door on the first floor consists of double glass sliding doors. Linda Christmann remembers the original windows being double-hung sash 6/1.

The older main core house is built with horizontal wood boards over framing, and the addition walls are plywood over framing.

The front open porch is all concrete with five steps. The porch roof is gabled with composition shingle roofing. Adjoining the rear glass sliding doors is a deck with wood rails and seven wood steps to the back yard. Another door is located on the north side.

## INTERIOR FEATURES

The interior of the older main house has been completely remodeled. Wall coverings consist of paneling and painted or wallpapered sheetrock. Under that in the original house is wood strips chinked with concrete. Floors are softwood in the original house and plywood in the addition.

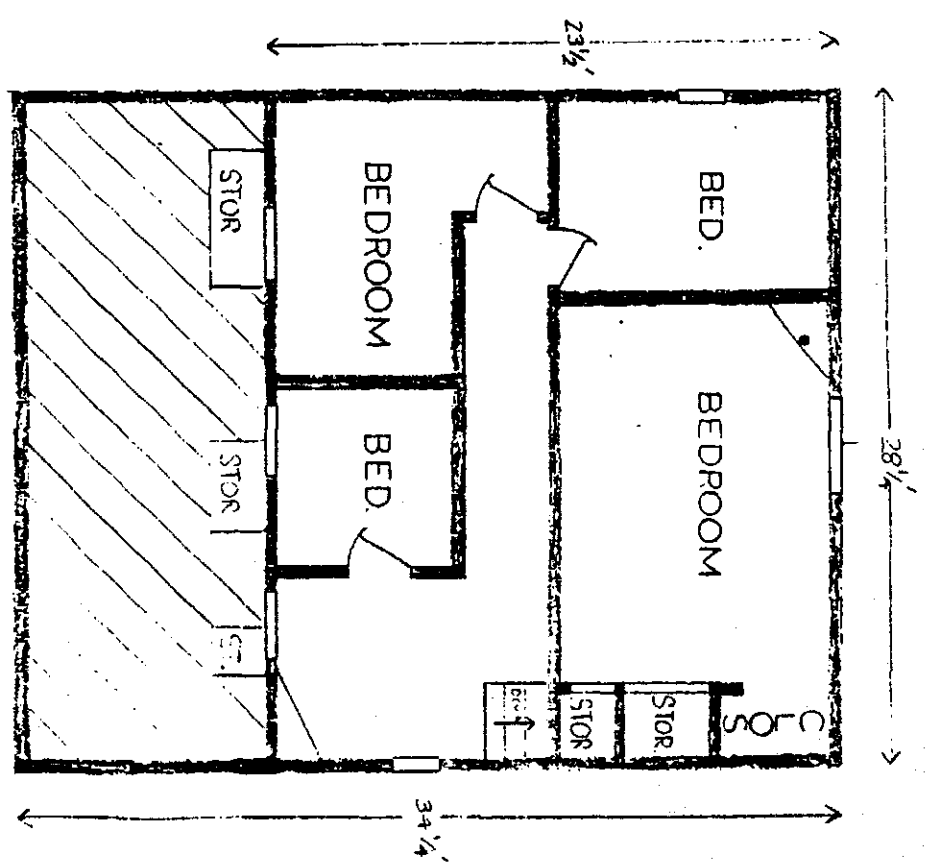
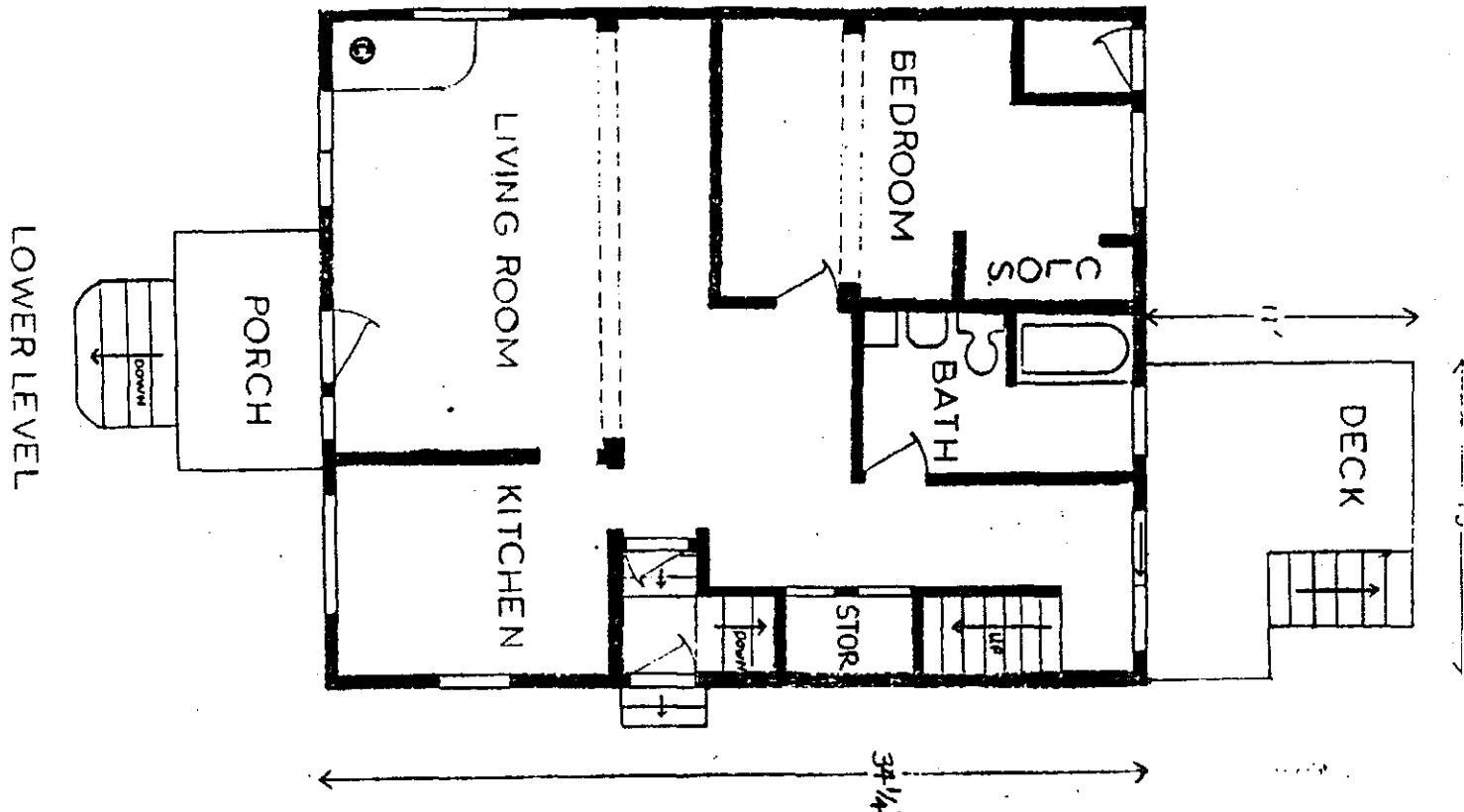
The living room contains a rock and mortar base for a wood stove with Z-Brick back. The straight flight stairs to the second floor are carpeted. Construction and wall covering on the second floor are the same as the first floor with carpeting or linoleum on the floors. The second story contains some built in drawers in the bedrooms.

The kitchen contained newer oak cabinets and an aluminum double

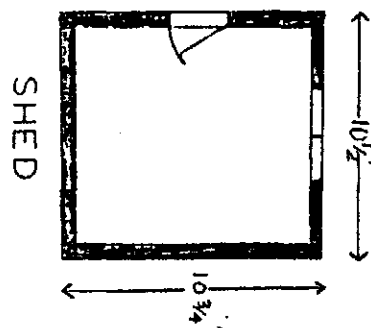
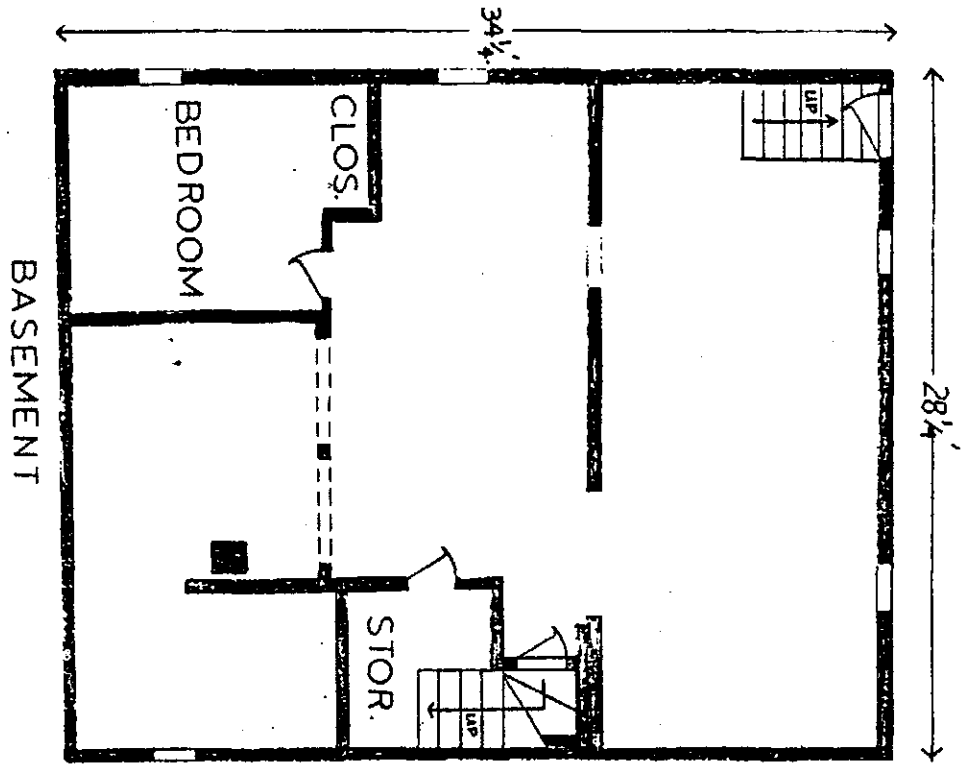
sink.

On the main floor, four steps lead down to a landing and the north-facing door. From the landing, four steps and three winders lead to the basement. The basement contains the base of a cinderblock chimney that extends up through the kitchen and roof. (Linda Christmann said the Watts experienced a chimney fire while they lived in the house, and they replaced the older brick chimney with the current cinderblock chimney.) One room is finished with paneling in the basement. A large hole that serves as a door has been broken into the original west-facing concrete wall that provides access to the newer-portion basement.

Heat source is oil furnace forced air, located in the basement, and wood stove, located on the first floor.

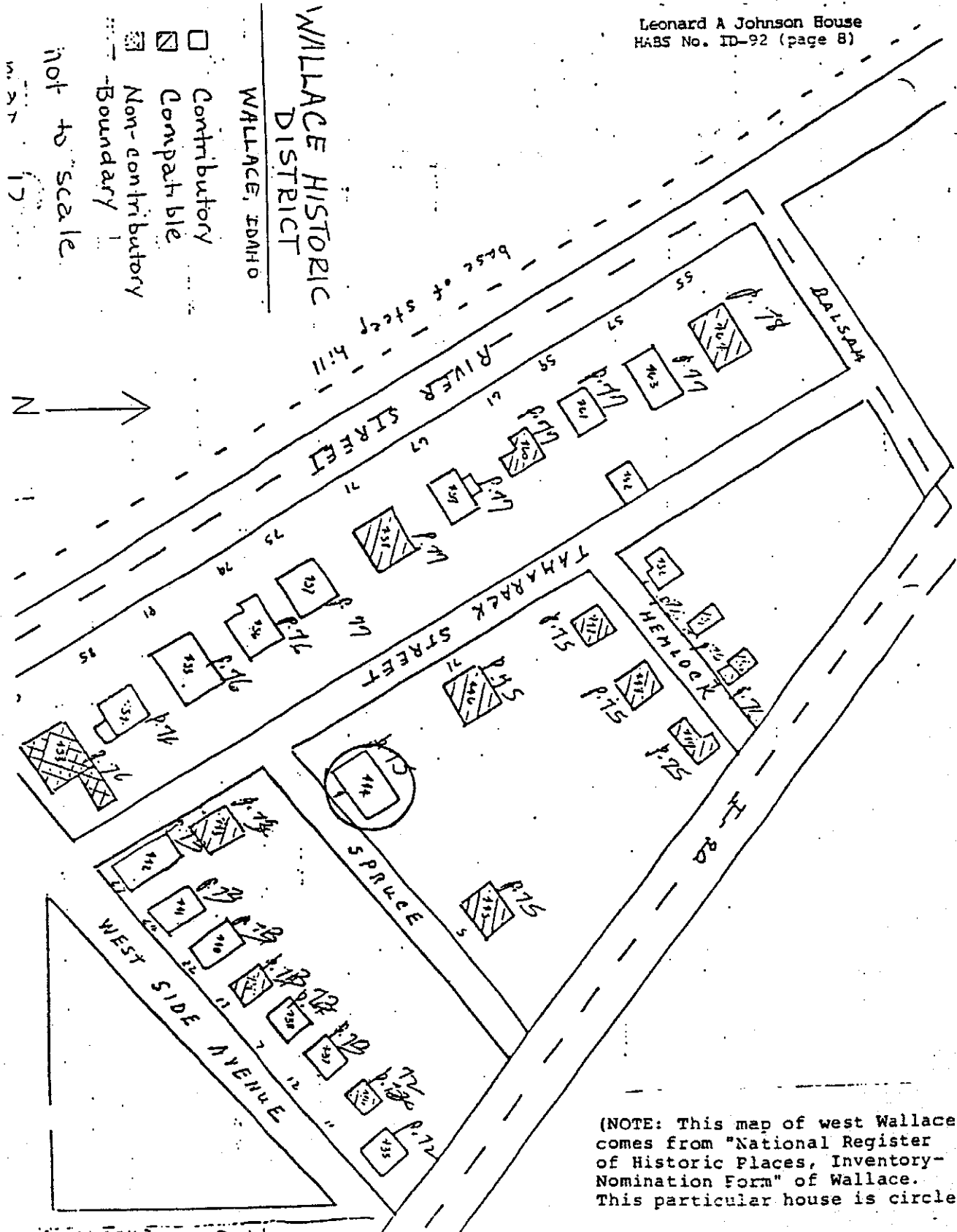


SCALE 1/8"=1'  
K.A. STALEY



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(NOTE: This map of west Wallace comes from "National Register of Historic Places, Inventory-Nomination Form" of Wallace. This particular house is circled.